

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hall of Mt. Hope Lodge No. 2

and/or common Hall of Mt. Hope Lodge No. 2

2. Location

street & number East side Sharptown-Skinners Neck Rd., .3 miles south of Rt. 20, East of Rock Hall CR 20, E. of Rt. 20 ☐ not for publication

city, town Rock Hall ☒ vicinity of congressional district first

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Social

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mt. Hope Lodge No. 2, c/o Mrs. William Lee

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Rock Hall state and zip code Maryland 21661

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber SB 14

street & number folio 557

city, town Chestertown state Maryland 21620

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-511

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Built in the last decade of the 19th century, the 3-bay-wide, main-entry gable end of the 2-story, 3-bay deep portion of this frame lodge hall faces Sharptown Road. A 3-bay, shed-roofed porch was added to this end in the mid-20th century. A 3-bay-deep, 1-story kitchen was added to the rear gable end and used as a schoolroom for grades 1-3 of the Sharptown School during the first quarter of the 20th century. Originally weather-boarded, the exterior is now covered with red "brick" asphalt sheet siding. The interior was not viewed.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-511

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Located in the community of Sharptown, the Mt. Hope Lodge Hall has served for almost 100 years as one of three important community centers for Rock Hall - area blacks (see also K-510, Aaron Chapel, and K-512 and K-513, Sharptown Schools). The second story was reserved for lodge meetings, but the first story was used for church suppers (obviating the need for a hall for Aaron Chapel across the road), movies, and large private parties and dinners. During a period of overcrowding at the small Old Sharptown School (K-512), the rear, kitchen wing housed the first three grades. The lodge itself, a beneficial society popularly called a "sickness and death" lodge, was the community's response to needs not yet met by a local hospital and such social welfare programs as Medicare, Medicaid, and disability and medical insurance. Though its reason for being has largely passed, the lodge still meets, but with a membership of mostly elderly men and women.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-511

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Q. Fallaw, Surveyor

County Commissioners of Kent County

organization Historical Society of Kent County

date November 9, 1982

street & number The Court House

778-4600

Church Alley

telephone 778-3499

city or town Chestertown

state Maryland 21620

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION (continued)

BUILDING FORM AND MATERIAL

1. Size
Main Section: 2 stories, 3 bays wide (gable end, which faces road and contains main entry), 3 bays deep. Measurements are ca. 18'6" x 34'6" deep.
Wing: 1 story, 2/3 bays wide, 3 bays deep. Measurements are ca. 18'6" wide x 26'7" deep.
2. Plan type, main section: one large room, each floor, with stair along rear wall.
3. Roof type: gable both sections
4. Chimney(s):
 - 1) main section- south side between 1st and 2nd bays, for stove
 - 2) rear gable end, center, of wingMaterials: brick
Decorative elements: #1 has 2-course cap
5. Material/Walls
Main Section: frame. Details: red imitation-brick asphalt sheet siding over horizontal lapped weatherboard, with painted cornerboards.
Wing: frame. Same details.
6. Material/Roofs
Main Section: asphalt shingles over ?
Wing: asphalt shingles over wood shingles
7. Material/Foundation
Main section: brick piers, some rebuilt in mid-20th century with new brick.
Wing: same
8. Age
Main section: deed is dated March 4, 1890, recorded Sept. 18, 1891. A building probably was built soon after, at least within the next ten years.
Wing: later
9. Style: vernacular, rural, late Victorian lodge hall. Others in Kent County are similar in appearance.

BUILDING ELEMENTS AND DETAILS

1. Doors
Main Entry: approach gable end, facing road; plain trim is replacement; 4-panel (2/2) door appears to be replacement; porch added 1950's?
Secondary entries: 1) south side, 3rd bay to rear (perhaps for access to stair?); plain replacement trim; 4-panel door. 2) Wing, rear gable end, south bay-door with 5 horizontal panels.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION (continued)

2. Windows

Main Section: type - double-hung
 lights - 6/6, old wavy glass
 details: narrow fillet with inside bead trim, wood sills
 shutters: removed
 Wing: same as main section

3. Dormers: None

4. Roof details

Main section: plain closed cornice following rafters on underside;
 overhang of about 10' - 12 inches on all sides.
 Wing: same

5. Porches:

Approach gable end, 3 bays wide, not original to building. 4" x 4" posts, shed roof with asphalt shingles, concrete slab on ground with concrete block steps and stoop at door (replaced small set of wooden steps). Built in 1950's?

6. Color: Current: red "brick" siding with white trim
 Historic: areas of exposed weatherboard show no paint

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

Interior not viewed by surveyor except through wing windows which did not have obscuring curtains. Member of community described interior.

1. Plan type: one large room each floor of main section, 1 room in wing.
2. Major stair: straight run, along rear wall of main section
3. Major mantels: none

OUTBUILDINGS/SITE DESCRIPTION

1. Outbuildings: a "necessary"

2. Site description

The 3/4 acre site is fairly flat, with an uneven lawn (no trees) to the south which is continuous with the lawn of a house located several lots to the south. A 30 to 40 foot lawn with a paved walk lies between the public road and the gable-end main entry porch. Woods have slowly moved in to about 15-20 feet of the building on the north side and are somewhat more distant at the rear (east).

3. Views to/from site

Sharptown Road is visible to the west, with woods on the opposite side to the west and Aaron Chapel (U.M. Church) to the northwest. There is no view to the north because of nearby woods. About 150 feet to the south is a small, mid-20th century "Cape Cod" house and the lane to the county's Sharptown dump to the south of the house. The Harris-Smith property (K-515) and the Old Sharptown School (K-512) are also seen to the south along the road, as well as several other houses. This is a small rural black community.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION (continued)

USE OF BUILDING

1. Current: lodge hall, church hall, private rental use.
2. Historic: lodge hall, church hall, private rental use. The rear wing was used as a school room for the overflow from the old Sharptown School (K-512) in the early 20th century, until the new Sharptown School (K-513) was built.

HISTORY OF BUILDING/PAST OWNERSHIP

Informants: Mr. and Mrs. William Lee (Laurine), Grey's Inn, Rock Hall. Incorporation papers in possession of Mrs. Lee, a descendant of one of the lodge's founders.

Organized in 1878, a "beneficial society" called "Mt. Hope Lodge No. 2, Order of Truth and Light" was incorporated on November 2, 1880, with the goal of "the advancement of the condition of our race (black), and the care and assistance of the sick and distressed." Daniel M. Butler, Mrs. Lee's grandfather and a local leader, was first Grand Master; Daniel Kennard was President. There is no local knowledge of a No. 1 lodge of the same name. Popularly known as a "sickness and death" lodge, it provided a systematic, community-run way to assist families of the sick, largely by assigning members in pairs to sit up with the sick so family members could get some sleep, and to prepare the bodies of the dead for burial. Dues sometimes were allocated to assist families whose main wage-earner was sick or injured in the days before medical insurance, disability benefits, and allowed worker "sick days." Dues also provided modest death/insurance benefits. The original functions of the lodge now largely obsolete since the advent of a Kent County hospital in 1935, Medicare in the 1960's and Medicaid, the lodge now has about 18-20 members, both men and women, but mostly women over age 60. They meet periodically for ritual and business purposes. When the lodge began, both men and women were members, but the leaders were men. Mrs. Lee has been a member since 1938. (See also K-503 for another example of a village lodge with similar intent, though in that instance a Knights of Pythias lodge for whites located in Piney Neck.)

Probably built ca. 1891-1900, the main section represents a considerable achievement by the black Sharptown community emergent after the Civil War. According to Mr. Lee, it took about 15-20 years after the war for area blacks to accumulate enough cash to enable them to move off nearby farms and build their own homes. Though it is true that by 1850 more than half of Kent County blacks were free rather than enslaved, many of them still lived on the farms on which they were employed, in housing provided by their employers.

The lodge at Sharptown served blacks from the general Rock Hall area: Sharptown itself, Grays Inn in upper Eastern Neck, Biscuit Hill on the Gratitude Road, and until it built its own lodge hall after the turn of the century, the increasingly black community of Edesville-Lovers' Lane.

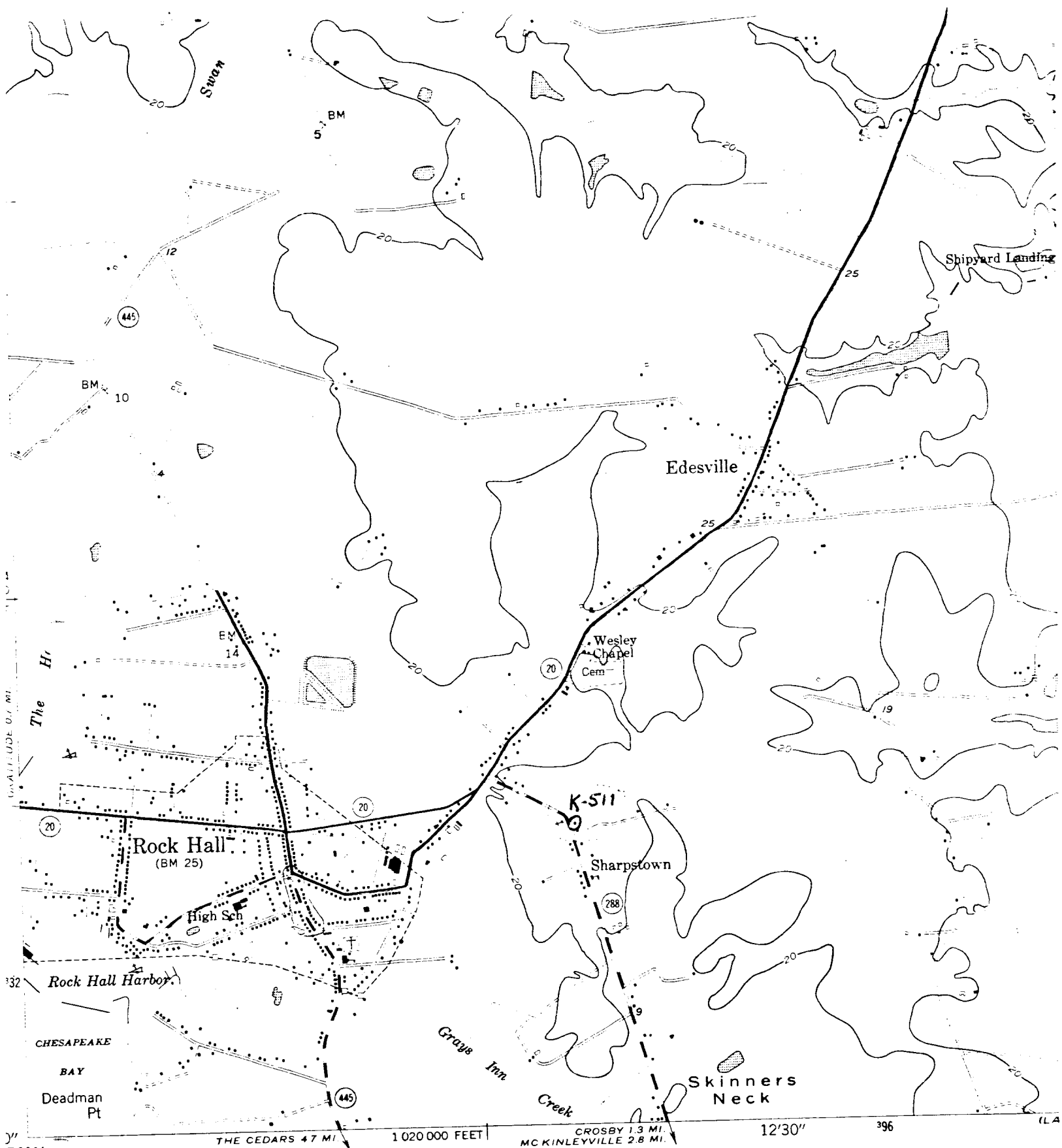
Over the years the second story has been used for lodge meetings and the first story for community events, such as church suppers of Aaron Chapel

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.4 DESCRIPTION (continued)

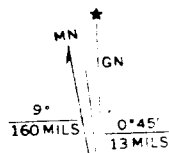
(Methodist) across the road. Indeed, since most of the lodge members were also members of that church as well, the church never saw the need to build a church hall. The first story also has been rented for private events, such as family reunions and dinners and wedding receptions because of the small size of most of the community's houses.

The rear wing was added ca. 1900-1910 to provide kitchen facilities. Shortly thereafter it began to handle the overflow student population of the old Sharptown School, housing the first three grades; the space was rented by the county school board. After the new Sharptown School was built in the 1920's, the entire student body was housed in the new building.



ROCK HALL QUADRANGLE

Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953
Hydrography from USC&GS charts 548 and 549,
dated 1944



NATIONAL